

this time today. We are in the situation where several of our ranking subcommittee members are not on the floor because they did not know this motion was going to be made. I do not think it is quite fair to them to proceed under this kind of a situation.

I recognize it is not the fault of the gentleman from New Mexico, so I will not object; and we have no interest in delaying the action of the House, but I would simply ask that in the future, action be taken to make certain that the minority is made aware in a timely fashion of the intent to make these motions at a time so that we can be prepared as quickly as possible in making the correct motions.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I yield to the gentleman from New Mexico.

□ 1600

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I share the same approach that the gentleman has because we were given the word at exactly about the same time that he had it. Thank God the word finally got here, but it certainly puts a lot of folks in a position of not knowing that it was coming on the floor.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. I would simply say to the leadership of the House, we are trying to be cooperative on this committee on both sides. It is pretty hard to cooperate if we don't have prior notice.

The gentleman has indicated he hasn't had that notice either, and I think that's equally unfortunate.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Mexico?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. OBEY

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. OBEY moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the House and Senate on H.R. 1906, Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations for FY 2000, be instructed to provide maximum funding, within the scope of conference, for food safety programs at the Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), and the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. SKEEN) each will be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I will not take very long. The situation is very simple. The House bill is \$15 million above the Senate bill for the Department of Agriculture's food and safety inspection service programs, and it is \$5 million above the Senate bill for FDA food

safety initiatives. We believe the public has a right to have total confidence in the safety of its food supply. It certainly, in some instances unfortunately, does not have that to date. We think that the numbers in the bill will be at least minimally affected in increasing our ability to assure a safe food supply for the American public and would urge, therefore, that the conferees be instructed to provide the higher of the two numbers in each account in order to do the maximum that is allowable under rules, given the difference in scope between the two bills, to assure that food safety is the highest priority in the bill as it comes back from conference.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SKEEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the gentleman that I support his effort and have no quarrel whatever with the work. I think this is the time that we should work toward the goal of taking care of the matters attendant to the field of agriculture, and to get it done as quickly as possible because it has been sitting there fermenting for quite some time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to instruct offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY).

The motion was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will name the conferees at a later time.

THE REASON FOR CONFUSION IN THE HOUSE

(Mr. OBEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, in case people are wondering what is happening here, why the House looks so disorganized, it is for the following reason: Those of us on the Minority on the Appropriations Committee have been working with the Majority on the committee all today under the assumption that we would have a common understanding about what the schedule would be for the remainder of the day, and we had expected one and perhaps at most two motions would be made to go to conference on appropriation bills.

We were trying to cooperate with the Majority in making sure that that went smoothly on the matters that we understood might come before us. Then what happened is that evidently the House leadership decided it wanted to make a unilateral decision to have motions on five different appropriation

bills. The problem is that the Majority on the Committee on Appropriations did not know that that was going to happen and neither did the Minority. In my view, that is a lousy way to run a railroad. The House is running around here now looking confused because it is confused.

It just seems to me that there is no particular purpose to be served in rushing to conference on these bills when neither side even understood that we were going to be doing that. I am still trying to cooperate under these circumstances, but I would ask the House leadership that if we cannot do this in an orderly fashion for some of the remaining bills that we simply deal with it tomorrow morning, if we run out of bills that we can handle in a rational fashion, because otherwise we are simply stumbling around here. And in the process, we will be denying Members the opportunity to debate questions which I know Members wanted to debate on at least two of the bills that are coming up today.

Members did not know this would be happening before they got back, and I think the leadership has an obligation to avoid situations like that.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS) at 5 p.m.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 2605, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2605) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT OFFERED BY MR. VISCLOSKEY

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct conferees.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. VISCLOSKEY moves that in resolving the difference between the House and Senate, the